

Message Text

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PAGE 01 VIENTI 00509 030822Z
ACTION IO-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EA-06 EUR-08 EB-04 /039 W
-----005569 030949Z /14

R 030722Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9233
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL UDORN
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 0509

LIMDIS

BANGKOK ALSO PLEASE PASS UDORN ELECTRICALLY

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

ROME FOR FODAG

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, EAGR, US, LA UNDP, WFP
SUBJECT: LAO EMERGENCY FOOD AID

1. THE VIENTIANE-BASED REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN'S WORLD
FOOD PROGRAM CALLED AT THE EMBASSY APRIL 28 TO GIVE US A
COPY OF A COMMERCIAL TELEGRAM SENT FROM OFFICIALS OF THE
AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE AND THE MENONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE
IN PHILADELPHIA TO THE AMERICAN FIELD SERVICE REPRESENTA-
TIVES HERE IN VIENTIANE. THE TEXT OF THE TELEGRAM, WHICH
IS OF COURSE KNOWN TO THE LAO GOVERNMENT, READS AS FOLLOWS:

2. "STATE DEPARTMENT UNDERMINING EFFORTS URGE US FOODAID
LAOS SAYING VIENTIANE EMBASSY QUOTES U.S. RESREP THAT
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LAOS UNABLE ABSORB ADDITIONAL FOOD PLUS WFP DELAYING
EIGHT MILLION DOLLAR FOOD FOR WORK AS UNNEEDED
UNABSORBABLE STOP INTERESTINGLY STATE IMPLIES JOINT
UNDP MCC AFSC EMBASSY RECOMMENDATION US GOVERNMENT AID
TRANSMEKONG SHIPPING POSSIBLY WELCOME WASHINGTON STOP
CAARIFICATION URGENT PLEASE CABLE SOONEST."

3. IN A MAY 2 CALL BY THE CHARGE ON THE UNDP RESREP TO DISCUSS ANOTHER MATTER (SEPTTEL), THE RESREP BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT OF THE TELEGRAM AND APOLOGIZED FOR THE WFP REPRESENTATIVE'S LACK OF DISCRETION IN PASSING THE TEXT TO THE EMBASSY. THE RESREP SAID THAT HE WOULD NATURALLY HAVE TO TRY TO PROTECT HIMSELF WITH THE LPDR, ALTHOUGH HE THOUGHT IT ENTIRELY POSSIBLE THAT HE COULD BE EXPELLED FROM LAOS. IN AN EFFORT TO TRY TO PREVENT THIS, THE RESREP SAID THAT HE PLANNED TO LAUNCH A PERSONAL CAMPAIGN TO REVIVE THE DROUGHT APPEAL.

4. COMMENT: THERE IS A STRONG BELIEF IN MANY QUARTERS THAT IF ANY ADDITIONAL COMMODITIES SENT TO LAOS, THEY COULD NOT RPT NOT BE TRANSPORTED, STORED, OR EVEN EATEN BEFORE THE NEXT HARVEST.

5. FROM OUR VIEWPOINT, IT SEEMS AS IF THE BEST WAY TO LIMIT THE DAMAGE IN THIS UNFORTUNATE SITUATION WOULD BE TO AUTHORIZE US TO MAKE THE PRESENTATION SUGGESTED IN THE REFTEL, I.E., CONGRATULATE THE LAO ON APPARENTLY MEETING THEIR NEEDS UNTIL NEXT NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER AND STATE THAT WE ARE THUS PUTTING OUR CONSIDERATION PROCESS OF POSSIBLE U.S. FOOD AID ON HOLD FOR ABOUT SIX MONTHS.

ROBERTS
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NNN

Message Attributes

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